



FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY · 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

Family Feedback Loop

A seasonal analysis of how informed Lake Bluff D65 families feel about their child's academic progress — and what they need next.

204

TOTAL RESPONSES

3

SURVEY WINDOWS

7

GRADE LEVELS

Family

RESPONDENTS ONLY

01


Who Responded – and When

204 families responded across three survey windows during the 2025–26 school year. The Fall window generated the strongest response (n=114), followed by Winter (n=80) and a smaller Spring pulse (n=10). There were no staff responses. All data reflects family perspectives only.

114

 Fall Respondents
Oct 2025

80

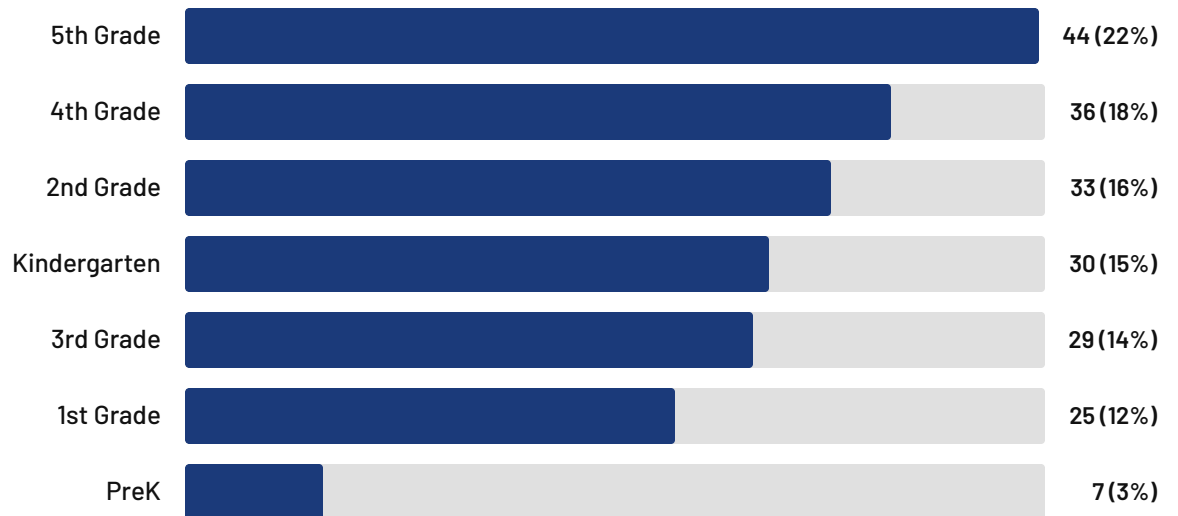
 Winter Respondents
Feb 2026

10

 Spring Respondents
May 2026

Grade Level Distribution – All Responses Combined

n=204 family respondents



SPRING SAMPLE SIZE NOTE

With only 10 Spring respondents, those findings are directional – meaningful as a late-year signal, but not statistically comparable to Fall or Winter. Patterns should inform planning, not be treated as definitive.

STRONG FALL & WINTER BASE

194 responses across Fall and Winter provide a reliable foundation for year-over-year tracking. Consistent survey windows allow D65 to measure how family sentiment shifts through the school year.




02

How Informed Do Families Feel?

Families were asked: "At this point in the school year, how informed do you feel about your child's academic progress?" The results reveal a meaningful shift across the year – with confidence declining from Fall to Winter, and a concerning dip by Spring.

Informed Score – Seasonal Comparison

% of respondents selecting each response, by survey window

RESPONSE	 FALL (N=114)	 WINTER (N=80)	 SPRING (N=10)
Very Well Informed	45%	35%	10%
Mostly Informed	23%	26%	0%
Somewhat Informed	18%	20%	40%
Slightly Informed	9%	18%	40%
Not at All Informed	6%	1%	10%
"Very Well" + "Mostly" Combined	68%	61%	10%

△ **KEY SHIFT: FALL → WINTER**

The share of families feeling "Very Well Informed" dropped from **45% to 35%** between Fall and Winter. The "Slightly Informed" rate nearly doubled – from 9% to 18%. Conferences help, but don't fully close the gap.

📌 **WHAT THIS SIGNALS**

The strongest information touchpoints (direct teacher emails, report cards, conferences) are doing most of the work. When those slow down mid-year, family confidence drops. Consistency – not volume – is the fix.

03

What's Working – Received vs. Wanted

Families were asked what updates they've received (top sources of feeling informed) and what updates they still want. The gap between those two lists is where the communication opportunity lives.



Fall 2025 – What Informed Families Most

n=114 · Select all that apply, max 3

Updates Received – Fall

% of Fall respondents who selected each channel as a top-3 source of feeling informed



Updates Wanted – Fall

What families said would help them feel more informed · n=114



Winter 2026 – What Informed Families Most

n=80 · Select all that apply, max 3

Updates Received – Winter

% of Winter respondents who selected each channel · n=80



Updates Wanted – Winter

What families said would help them feel more informed · n=80



Spring 2026 – What Informed Families Most

n=10 · Directional only

Updates Wanted – Spring

Strongest signal from the smallest window · n=10



By spring, direct teacher communication is overwhelmingly the channel families want more of – even more so than earlier in the year.




04

Where Families Feel Most Informed

ELA and Math dominate family awareness in both Fall and Winter – a consistent pattern reflecting how much of the direct communication infrastructure is built around core academics. Enrichment subjects and co-curriculars lag significantly.

Subjects – Seasonal Comparison

% of respondents who feel informed in each subject, by season

SUBJECT AREA	 FALL (N=114)	 WINTER (N=80)	 SPRING (N=10)
ELA (Reading & Writing)	68%	65%	30%
Math	68%	62%	70%
Science (Enrichment K-5)	14%	29%	10%
Social Studies (Enrichment K-5)	14%	20%	10%
Co-Curriculars (Art, Music, PE)	18%	29%	30%

⚠️ ENRICHMENT VISIBILITY GAP

Only **14% of Fall families** felt informed about Science or Social Studies. Even by Winter, fewer than 1 in 3 felt informed about enrichment subjects. Open text confirms this gap is felt – and frustrating to parents who want to reinforce learning at home.

✓ CORE SUBJECTS ARE HOLDING

ELA and Math awareness remain above 60% across both major windows – a strong baseline. The families who feel well-informed in these subjects consistently credit **direct teacher communication and graded work sent home**.

05

What Families Are Really Saying

77 families provided open-text comments across the three survey windows. Four themes emerged consistently – across grades, seasons, and survey windows.

1

ACTION NEEDED

Direct Teacher Communication Is the #1 Driver – and the #1 Gap

Across all three seasons, direct emails and messages from teachers ranked as the top source of feeling informed – and the top channel families said they still needed more of. This isn't a request for more communication in general; it's a request for *personal* communication about their specific child. Families who named specific teachers as outstanding communicators (Mr. Ellis, Mrs. Chagas, Mrs. Griffith, Mrs. Schappert) described concrete behaviors: regular emails, graded work with comments, clear expectations. Families who felt uninformed almost always described a teacher who was not sending consistent updates. The gap is not about platform or policy – it's about consistency across classrooms.

"Mr. Ellis sets the bar for how comprehensive his direct emails are to parents – very thoughtful, direct explanations of unit goals and expectations... We should be modeling this across other classrooms."— Winter Family Respondent

2

CRITICAL GAP

Enrichment Communication Is Nearly Invisible

Science, Social Studies, Spanish, and Music ranked at the bottom of every subject awareness chart. Open text confirms families aren't just uninformed – they're specifically frustrated. Multiple respondents described enrichment updates as "blanket statements" shared with the entire grade rather than meaningful insight into what their child is learning. Several called for a curriculum overview at the start of the year. The concern isn't isolated to curiosity – parents want to reinforce learning at home, and without subject-level communication, they can't. This gap widens at the upper elementary grades, where families are beginning to think about middle school readiness.

"I would love to see a clear science and social studies curriculum... an aesthetically pleasing Canva poster is productive information." – Fall Family Respondent

3

CRITICAL GAP

Seesaw Is Inconsistently Used – and Families Notice

Seesaw appears in both the "what's working" and "what's frustrating" categories simultaneously – which tells you the platform isn't the problem. Multiple families explicitly noted that some teachers post daily while others have never posted once. That inconsistency creates a perceived equity issue: families with communicative teachers feel like insiders; families with quieter teachers feel ignored. Several families also flagged that Seesaw is difficult to navigate and that teachers appear to be using features differently across classrooms. One Winter respondent asked whether the school has evaluated alternatives. The ask isn't a new app – it's a shared standard for how the current one should be used.

"If the standard at the beginning of the year is set to use Seesaw and weekly newsletters, that is what should be done. It is not occurring across the entire grade level." – Fall Family Respondent

4

STRENGTH TO BUILD ON

Families Trust the School – They Just Want More Access

Amid the gaps, a strong undercurrent of goodwill runs through the comments. Families love this school. Teachers are named and praised across dozens of responses. Several respondents explicitly said they didn't want to add to teacher workload – they were hesitant to reach out precisely because they respect how hard staff work. This is important context: the communication gap isn't rooted in distrust. It's rooted in families who assume no news is good news, who don't want to be a burden, and who would happily engage more if they knew how. That goodwill is an asset. It makes the communication gap easier to close – families are already leaning in.

"I am sensitive about not wanting to add to the teachers' workload. I am mostly just curious what he's like at school!" – Fall Family Respondent

06

What to Do Next

These recommendations are grounded directly in the data. Each one targets a specific, measurable gap — and each one is within the district's direct control to address before the 2026–27 school year.

1

HIGH PRIORITY

Establish a Classroom Communication Standard — and Make It Visible

Define a clear, grade-band expectation for teacher-to-family communication frequency: what families should receive, how often, and through which channel — including Seesaw. The data shows that the families who feel most informed have teachers who communicate proactively and consistently, but that experience is not universal. Multiple families specifically named the inconsistency in Seesaw usage across classrooms as a source of frustration; some teachers post regularly while others have not posted at all. A shared communication standard — covering both direct outreach and platform expectations — shared with families at the start of the year closes the information gap before it opens and eliminates the perception of inequity between classrooms.

2

HIGH PRIORITY

Build a Strategic Enrichment Communication Plan

Science, Social Studies, Spanish, and Music ranked at the bottom of every subject awareness chart — and open text confirms families aren't passively unaware, they're actively frustrated. The opportunity is to build a strategic enrichment communication approach that starts with greater clarity at back-to-school: what each subject covers, how it connects to student growth, and what families can expect to hear throughout the year. Beyond that, consider what a standard for personalized outreach from enrichment teachers to families could look like — even a brief, periodic touchpoint specific to a student's work or participation would meaningfully close the gap families described between "my child passes through enrichment" and "I understand what my child is learning there."

3

MEDIUM PRIORITY

Send Graded Work Home with Teacher Feedback – Consistently

Families repeatedly cited graded work with teacher comments as one of the most valued forms of communication. Several Winter respondents described receiving folders full of ungraded morning work and coloring sheets with no evidence a teacher had reviewed them. Graded work doesn't need to be elaborate – a brief note or a rubric score signals that learning is being tracked and that the teacher sees the student. Build this expectation into the classroom communication standard (Recommendation 1) so families across all classrooms receive it equally.

4

MEDIUM PRIORITY

Anchor the Survey Calendar to Parent Conferences

Rather than three survey windows spread across the year, administer the Family Feedback Loop approximately two weeks after each parent conference – Fall and Spring. This timing is strategic: families have just had a direct conversation with their child's teacher, making their sense of how informed they feel both current and grounded. It also creates a natural feedback loop tied to the district's most significant communication touchpoints. Two focused, well-promoted windows will produce more actionable data than a third mid-year window with lower response rates and less contextual relevance.